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Everyday Alternatives

Make easy changes to your lifestyle to save natural resources and money.

Reduce Reuse and Recycle

Reducing Consumption and Waste

Instead of....	Use...	Here's Why...
Buying bottled water	A water filter and reusable bottle	You'll save an average of \$200 a year and have better tasting water while keeping 14 pounds of plastic out of landfills.
Buying tickets at the venue	The telephone or web to print at home.	You'll save time and the plain copy paper is easier to recycle than the paperboard used for tickets.
Buying a new book	Secondhand bookstores or libraries	About three billion new books are sold each year, requiring 400,000 trees to be chopped down.
Buying wrapping paper	Old gift bags, newspaper, or maps	Each year ten million tons of newspapers are tossed into landfills, if reused or recycled, this would save 150 million trees.
Buying single-use rags, dusters, and paper towels to clean	An old t-shirt, sheet, or traditional mop	83,000 tons of disposable cleaning cloths are thrown in landfills each year and are not readily biodegradable. Reusing old, machine-washable materials will also save you money.
Buying disposable plastic pens	Refillable pens, pencils, and markers	Disposable plastic pens are not recyclable or biodegradable. Throw one away and it will be in a landfill 50,000 years from now.
Buying paper plates and plastic ware	Flatware, silverware and glasses	Each year 40 billion plastic utensils are thrown into landfills. Using your own dishes is free, while using disposable alternatives could cost an extra \$100 for every 50 meals.

Instead of....	Use...	Here's Why...
Buying traditional printer paper	Post-consumer recycled paper	It requires 44% less energy to produce, reducing GHG emissions by 37% and producing almost half as much solid waste.
Buying a soda in a can or bottle	A fountain machine	You'll reduce the mount of aluminum cans and plastic bottles that are wasted.
Sending paper invitations in the mail	Use electronic invitations or e-vites	Online invitations eliminate stationary costs, mailing costs, and saves paper.
Buying magazines and newspapers at a stand	Subscription services	Subscribers save 50-75% off the cover price as well as the trip to the newsstand. About 60% of most magazines and 10 million tons of newspapers are not sold and hauled to a landfill.
Using the paper luggage tags at the airline ticket counter	The tag that came with your luggage set	You'll save time at the ticket counter as well as paper. If every traveler in the US stopped using paper luggage tags for each of their trips, 60 million sheets of paper could be saved each year.
Using plastic grocery bags	Paper or reusable cloth bags	Grocery baggers usually fill paper bags with more items, reducing the total amount of bags used, and paper bags can be more easily reused and recycled.
Buying individual items	Bulk packaging	You will pay up to 50 percent less and significantly reduce the mount of energy needed to transport all that extra packing waste to landfills and recycling facilities.
Receiving bank statements and bills in the mail	Paperless, online alternatives	If every household paid just the credit card bill electronically, it would save \$2 billion a year in postage costs. Some banks offer additional benefits for switching to paperless

Source:

Rogers and Kostigen. *The Green Book*. Random House, New York. 2007



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